

Application number 09/835,021
Amendment dated June 3, 2003
Reply to office action of January 3, 2003

PATENT

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

After entry of this amendment, claims 3-6, 17-21, 23-25, and 27-40 will be pending in this application. Claims 3, 6, 17, 23, and 27 have been amended. Claims 31-40 have been added. Support for the new and amended claims can be found in the specification, no new matter has been added.

Claims 27-30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 second paragraph. Claims 3, 4, 23, and 24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Lincoln, United States patent number 6,072,363. Claims 3-5, 23, and 24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Denker et al., United States patent number 5,559,463. Claims 3-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gabara et al., United States patent number 6,249,192. Claims 17-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Denker et al. in view of Clapp, III et al., United States patent number 5,539,334. Reconsideration of these rejections in light of these remarks is respectfully requested.

Claim 25 has been allowed.

Claim 3

Claim 3 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Lincoln. Claim 3 also stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Denker et al. (Denker), and also under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gabara et al. (Gabara). But none of these references show or suggest each and every element of this claim. For example, claim 3 as amended recites "wherein the first current and the second current are generated by transistors that are biased to have gate-source voltages approximately equal to their threshold voltages." None of the cited references provide this feature.

Lincoln describes the bridge transistors as being "switches," and are not shown as being biased as required by the claim. Rather, the switches are described as being "on or off." (See Lincoln, column 10, line 6.)

Similarly in Denker, the NMOS devices 24 and 26 in Figure 4 are shown as being driven by signals in Figure 5 which appear to be typical rail-to-rail signals, though this is not specified. In any event, there is no indication that the devices 24 and 26 are biased as required

Application number 09/835,021
Amendment dated June 3, 2003
Reply to office action of January 3, 2003

PATENT

by the claim. In Gabara, devices 203c and 203d are not shown as being biased in any particular manner.

For at least this reason, claim 3 should be allowed.

Claim 17

Claim 17 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Denker et al. in view of Clapp, III et al. (Clapp). But neither of these references show or suggest each and every element of this claim. For example, claim 17 as amended recites "a seventh device coupled between a current source and the first supply node, having a control electrode coupled to the first input node and the second input node." The cited references do not provide this feature.

Denker does not provide the details of the clock control circuits such as the clock control circuit 28 of Figure 4. However, since the clock signals of Figure 5 are shown to be applied to the gates of devices 24 and 26, it is reasonable that their gates are driven by the output of a logic circuit such as an inverter or NAND gate. In any event, Denker does not show or suggest the seventh device as required by the claim. Clapp adds nothing on this point.

For at least this reason, claim 17 should be allowed.

Other claims

Claims 4 and 5 depend on claim 3 and should be allowed for at least the same reasons as claim 3, and for the additional limitations they recite.

Claim 6 should be allowed for similar reasons as claim 3.

Claims 18, 31, and 32 depend on claim 17, and should be allowed for at least the same reasons as claim 17, and for the additional limitations they recite.

Claim 23 should be allowed for similar reasons as claim 3.

Claim 24 depends on claim 23 and should be allowed for at least the same reasons as claim 23, and for the additional limitations it recites.

Application number 09/835,021
Amendment dated June 3, 2003
Reply to office action of January 3, 2003

PATENT

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal notice of allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 650-752-2456.

Respectfully submitted,



J. Matthew Zigman
Reg. No. 44,005

TOWNSEND and TOWNSEND and CREW LLP
Two Embarcadero Center, 8th Floor
San Francisco, California 94111-3834
Tel: 650-326-2400
Fax: 415-576-0300
JMZ:jmz
PA 3309092 v1

FAX RECEIVED

JUN 3 2003

TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2800